

Message Text

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SUBJECT: GUIDANCE FOR 97TH UNESCO EXBD : ITEM 3.2.1 :
IN-DEPTH STUDY OF THE METHODS OF WORK OF THE GENERAL
CONFERENCE

REFS : A) PARIS 07546 B) DOCUMENT 97 EX/SP/2

1. MATERIAL COLLECTED IN REFDOK, PARTICULARLY DE HOOG'S
CONTRIBUTION (ANNEX III), PROVIDES BASIS FOR WHAT WEHOPE
WILL BE VERY FRUITFUL DISCUSSIONS IN SPECIAL COMMITTEE AND
BOARD MEETINGS. U.S. EFFORTS SHOULD BE AIMED AT

ACCEPTANCE OF NEED FOR FUNDAMENTAL CHANGES IN OUR WHOLE
APPROACH TO UNESCO'S GENERAL CONFERENCEAND RELATED
INSTITUTIONS.

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2. AS RATIONALE, PERMDEL MAY WISH TO POINT OUT THAT WE
SUBMIT THESE IDEAS IN SPIRIT OF HELPFULNESS TO DG IN HIS
ATTEMPT TO STREAMLINE ORGANIZATION AND THAT FUNDAMENTAL
CHANGES IN GC PROCEDURES ARE PARTICULARLY TIMELY NOW IN
VIEW OF ORGANIZATION'S CONCERN WITHIMPLEMENTATION OF

18 C/4 AND ITS SUCCESSOR DOCUMENTS. AT THIS STAGE, OR EVEN AT SEPTEMBER BOARD, IT WOULD BE UNREALISTIC TO LOOK

FOR ADOPTION OF RADICAL SOLUTIONS. WHAT WE COULD HOPE FOR, HOWEVER, IS AGREEMENT THAT A RADICAL SOLUTION IS REQUIRED AND SUBSTANTIAL AGREEMENT ON AT LEAST THE MAIN ELEMENTS OF A PHASED PLAN AIMED AT OVERHAULING THE GC. THIS DOES NOT PRECLUDE PERFORMING MINOR REPAIRS IN MEAN-TIME TO IMPROVE OPERATING EFFICIENCY OF EXISTING GC MACHINERY, BUT EXPERIENCE OF PAST TEN YEARS HAS DEMONSTRATED THAT SUCH TINKERING DOES NOT RESULT IN REALLY BASIC IMPROVEMENT.

3. AT THIS TIME WE HAVE CONCLUDED (AT LEAST AS WORKING HYPOTHESIS) THAT ONLY FEASIBLE APPROACH TO STREAMLINING LIES IN EXPANDING AND OVERHAULING ROLE OF EXBD, WITHIN FRAMEWORK OF ITS EXISTING POWERS, AND, SECONDARILY, STRENGTHENING SUPPORT ROLE OF RESIDENT PERM DELS (PER AGENDA ITEM 3.4.1). THIS TENTATIVE CONCLUSION BASED ON FOLLOWING ANALYSIS, WHICH CLOSELY ACCORDS WITH DE HOOG'S EXCELLENT BACKGROUND PAPER THAT WE BELIEVE SHOULD SERVE AS PRINCIPAL BASIS FOR BOARD'S DISCUSSION:

(A) MAJOR FUNCTION OF GC IS TO APPROVE OBJECTIVES (ACCORDING TO PRIORITIES), BUDGET ALLOCATIONS AND PRINCIPAL TACTICS AND STRATEGIES OF BIENNIAL AND MEDIUM-TERM PLANS. AT PRESENT, HOWEVER, AS DG HIMSELF STRESSED DURING HIS MAIDEN SPEECH LAST FALL, GC'S BECOME BOGGED DOWN IN MINUTIAE WHICH THEY ARE ILL-PREPARED TO ADDRESS, AND WITH MOST UNFORTUNATE RESULTS IN TERMS OF CONFUSION (ESPECIALLY FOR THE SECRETARIAT, WHICH NEEDS CLEAR POLICY GUIDANCE), FRUSTRATION AND WASTED TIME, EFFORT AND MONEY.

(B) HEART OF PROBLEM IS PRESENT SCOPE OF C/5 WHICH GENERATES DOCUMENTATION OF MONUMENTAL PROPORTIONS (SEE UNCLASSIFIED

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CHARTS ON PP. 5-6 OF REFDOC), THAT IMPEDES RATHER THAN FACILITATES DECISION-MAKING. AS LONG AS C/5 DOCUMENT, IN PRESENT FORM, IS PRESENTED TO GC AS PAPER FOR DISCUSSION, GC WILL DISCUSS IT, WITH RESULT THAT REALLY IMPORTANT ISSUES BECOME LOST IN A WELTER OF DETAIL AND PROLIFERATION OF DRAFT RESOLUTIONS, WHILE POLICY MAKING BECOMES INCIDENTAL.

(C) MAIN ALTERNATIVE WOULD APPEAR TO BE TO FOCUS AND THEREBY SHARPLY REDUCE THE SCOPE OF THE GC'S WORK, WITH A BEFORE IT BASIC DETAILED BUDGET/PROGRAM DOCS (C/4 AND C/5). GC WOULD ONLY BE ASKED, IN EFFECT, TO RATIFY BOARD'S DETAILED WORK IN FORM OF BROAD, MAJOR DECISIONS WITHIN FRAMEWORK OF A RELATIVELY SHORT "SUMMARY PROGRAM" DOCUMENT. AREAS THAT FAILED TO RECEIVE GC APPROVAL WOULD

HAVE TO BE REWORKED BY BOARD IN CONCURRENT SESSION OR FOLLOWING GC. (NOTE THAT ARTICLE IV, B-2 OF UNESCO CONSTITUTION PROVIDES THAT GC SHALL "DETERMINE POLICIES AND MAIN LINES OF WORK OF ORGANIZATION... (AND) SHALL TAKE DECISIONS ON PROGRAMS SUBMITTED TO IT BY EXBD" BUT DOES NOT SPECIFY THE DETAIL IN WHICH THIS SHOULD BE DONE.)

(D) "SUMMARY PROGRAM" WOULD FOCUS GC ON IMPORTANT CHANGES IN PROGRAM POLICY AND RELATIVE ALLOCATION OF FUNDS, ACCORDING TO MAJOR PROGRAM OBJECTIVES. THIS, OF COURSE, IS TRADITIONAL LEGISLATIVE FUNCTION. "SUMMARY PROGRAM" WOULD CONTAIN AT LEAST THREE MAJOR PARTS: (1) ISSUES ON WHICH DG SEEKS ADVICE REGARDING PRIORITIES AND OTHER SPECIAL PROBLEMS OF A POLICY NATURE; (2) PROGRAM AUTHORITY AMENDMENTS PROPOSED TO THE GC BY THE BOARD (SOMEWHAT ALONG THE LINES OF THE C/6 DOCUMENT WHICH, IN PAST, HAS BEEN VIRTUALLY IGNORED BY GC); AND (C) BROAD BUDGET ALLOCATIONS REQUIRED TO GIVE EFFECT TO THE STANDING PROGRAM LEGISLATION, AS AMENDED.

(E) AS PRESENTLY CONSTITUTED, C/5 DOCUMENT (BIENNIAL PROGRAM) IS THE PRODUCT OF MANY AND DIVERSE SOURCES, GOVERNMENTAL AND NONGOVERNMENTAL ALIKE, OBTAINED DURING COURSE OF A BIENNIUM. ONE OF LEAST EFFECTIVE OF THESE SOURCES IS GC. ONE OF BEST IS INTERGOVERNMENTAL MEETINGS
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OF EXPERTS (CATEGORIES I AND II) HELD QUITE SEPARATE FROM GC. LATTER SHOULD BE GREATLY INCREASED, FOR EXPERIENCE INDICATES THAT THEY CAN OFTEN REACH A CONSENSUS AND THAT THEIR RECOMMENDATIONS ARE USUALLY RESPECTED AND ENDORSED BY THE GC WITH LIMITED DEBATE AND MINIMAL CHANGES. NATURAL SCIENCE SECTOR IS ALREADY WELL ADVANCED IN USE OF THIS TECHNIQUE, AND OTHER SECTORS WOULD BE WELL ADVISED TO EMULATE THEIR APPROACH. THE UNESCO PROGRAM LENDS ITSELF TO THIS, AS EVIDENCED BY THE ESTABLISHMENT OF DOZENS OF NATIONAL COMMITTEES FOR POPULATION, BOOK DEVELOPMENT, ETC.

(F) GENERAL CONFERENCE PROGRAM COMMISSIONS COULD PROBABLY BE ELIMINATED, WITH SUBSTANTIAL REDUCTION IN GC COSTS. MOST OF GC'S WORK WOULD THEREFORE BE DONE IN PLENARY SESSION. SPECIAL PROBLEMS AND ISSUES COULD BE HANDLED THROUGH CREATION OF WORKING GROUPS.

(G) ONE OF MAIN ADVANTAGES OF NEW C/5 PRESENTATION WOULD BE TO DRASTICALLY REDUCE NUMBER OF DRAFT RESOLUTIONS (DR'S) SINCE UNDER NEW ARRANGEMENT MAIN FUNCTION OF CONFERENCE WOULD BE TO DEAL WITH BROAD PROGRAM AND GENERAL POLICY MATTERS. THIS WOULD REQUIRE NEW, MORE

STRINGENT CRITERIA FOR SUBMISSION OF DR'S, BUT THIS PROBLEM COULD BE STUDIED BY A FUTURE SPECIAL COMMITTEE MEETING OF BOARD.

(H) RESOLUTIONS PROBLEM COULD ALSO BE AMELIORATED BY CODIFICATION OF GC DECISIONS, THEREBY ELIMINATING NEED FOR EACH GC SESSION TO RECONSIDER ROUTINE RESOLUTIONS. THIS ASSUMES, OF COURSE, THAT DECISIONS OF EACH SESSION ARE VALID UNTIL REVOKED. A CODIFICATION OF POLICY RESOLUTIONS WOULD ALSO BE USEFUL, NOT ONLY IN ENABLING SUCCEEDING SESSIONS TO PROCEED BY WAY OF AMENDMENT RATHER THAN REPETITION, BUT ALSO BY IDENTIFYING ANACHRONISMS AND MAKING IT POSSIBLE TO ESTABLISH THE CURRENT POLICY POSITION OF UNESCO ON ANY GIVEN QUESTION WITHOUT NEED FOR EXTENSIVE RESEARCH INTO RECORDS OF PAST SESSIONS.

(I) PROGRAM VETTING RESPONSIBILITIES TAKEN FROM GC WOULD UNCLASSIFIED

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AS NOTED ABOVE, HAVE TO BE VESTED IN A STRENGTHENED EXBD, BUT THIS WOULD REQUIRE CHANGES IN PRACTICE RATHER THAN IN STATUTES. BOARD'S PRESENT POWERS ARE, IN FACT, SUBSTANTIAL, BUT BOARD HAS FOUND IT DIFFICULT TO EXERCISE THEM FULLY, LARGELY BECAUSE OF ITS PREOCCUPATION WITH DETAIL BORDERING ON TRIVIA. THE SESSION OF THE BOARD IN THE SPRING PRECEDING THE GC WOULD HAVE AS ITS SOLE FUNCTION THE FULL, CRITICAL, AND CONSTRUCTIVE VETTING OF DRAFT C/5 PREPARED BY SECRETARIAT. BOARD MEMBERS WOULD BE BACKSTOPPED BY SPECIAL ADVISERS, AS NECESSARY, AND BY RESOURCES OF OTHER PERMDELS. ASSUMING HIGHLY MOTIVATED PARTICIPANTS AND WELL ORGANIZED PROCEDURAL MACHINERY, THIS BOARD SESSION COULD ACCOMPLISH FAR MORE AND IN LESS TIME THAN ITS PREDECESSORS DID. ONE FEATURE OF THIS APPROACH THAT WOULD BE HIGHLY BENEFICIAL IS FACT THAT THE SECRETARIAT WOULD BE REQUIRED TO DEFEND ITS PROPOSED PROGRAMS BEFORE THE RELATIVELY SMALL GROUP OF KNOWLEDGEABLE PERSONS WHO CONSTITUTE THE EX BD, THEREBY APPROXIMATING U. S. DOMESTIC PRACTICE OF CONGRESSIONAL HEARINGS.

4. REFDOC, PARTICULARLY IN ANNEXED BACKGROUND PAPERS, CONTAINS A NUMBER OF SPECIFIC TACTICAL SUGGESTIONS (AS OPPOSED TO STRATEGIC CONCEPTS DISCUSSED ABOVE) WITH WHICH WE CONCUR: (A) SCHEDULING OF GENERAL POLICY DEBATE AT END OF GC, BASED ON "CONSPECTUS" BY DG (ANNEX III, PARA. 29); (B) ELIMINATION OF DEBATE ON PROVISIONAL BUDGET CEILING (ANNEX III, PARA. 30, POINT ONE, PAGE EIGHT); (C) GREATER USE OF WORKING GROUPS WHICH WOULD MEET EARLY IN GC TO TACKLE CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES; AND (D) AMENDMENT OF RULES OF PROCEDURE CONCERNING DRAFT RESOLUTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION BY PLENARY (ANNEX VII, POINT SIX). THERE

ARE MANY OTHER POSSIBILITIES OF THIS KIND, BUT FOCUS OF

THIS CABLE HAS BEEN ON NEED FOR MAJOR RATHER THAN MINOR SURGERY.

5. ABOVE IDEAS ARE INTENDED TO ASSIST PERM DEL IN CONTRIBUTING TO WHAT WE HOPE WILL BE FRUITFUL EXCHANGE ON THIS HIGHLY COMPLICATED SUBJECT. DEPT. WOULD BE GRATEFUL IF IN REPORTING RESULTS OF DISCUSSIONS IN SPECIAL COMMITTEE AND BOARD, PERM DEL WOULD IDENTIFY UNCLASSIFIED

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AREAS THAT HOLD GREATEST PROMISE FOR EVENTUAL CONSENSUS AND WOULD PROVIDE ITS OWN ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO ASSIST DEPT'S FURTHER CONSIDERATION OF THIS IMPORTANT MATTER. KISSINGER

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